

# Assessor Handbook

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# Purpose of the assessor handbook

The Assessor Handbook provides guidance and support to assessment team members when undertaking accreditation assessments for nursing and midwifery programs that lead to eligibility to apply for registration or endorsement in Australia. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) is the independent accreditation authority appointed to undertake the accreditation functions of the National Law (National Registration and Accreditation Scheme) for all nursing and midwifery programs of study.

This should be read in conjunction with the:

- relevant accreditation standards
- Accreditation Policy and Procedure

[ANMAC EN Standards](#)

[ANMAC RN Standards](#)

[ANMAC Midwife Standards](#)

[ANMAC NP Standards](#)

[Accreditation Policy and Procedure](#)

## Duties and requirements

The role of an ANMAC Assessor is voluntary and supports community service to the professions of midwifery and nursing. However, sitting fees and remuneration are provided to offset personal costs that may occur when participating in the assessment.

ANMAC maintains a register of approved individuals as assessors based on current knowledge, skills, expertise and experience.

Nurses and midwives, with current registration in Australia, can apply to ANMAC for consideration as an assessor by submitting an [Expression of Interest](#) to ANMAC together with a current resume. It is the responsibility of the assessor to notify ANMAC of any changes in their contact, employment and registration details.

The assessor's role includes participating as part of the assessment team in the assessment process. The role includes undertaking the review of accreditation documents and assisting in preparation of written reports on the outcome of the assessment.

All ANMAC assessors must undertake assessor education and preparation for the role. Completion of assessor education and preparation modules and self-directed learning activities are relevant to continuing professional development. Assessors must comply with all ANMAC policies including Privacy, Work Health and Safety, Code of conduct, and Confidentiality.

### Essential requirements

1. Current registration as a nurse and/or midwife in Australia.
2. Bachelor's degree in nursing and/or midwifery
3. Post graduate qualifications in nursing and/or midwifery or other relevant area

### Key attributes

Assessors are selected on a program-by-program basis, considering your:

- Knowledge, skills, expertise, and experience, relevant to the program being assessed.
- Availability to participate in all stages of the assessment of the program.
- Confirmation by declaration you have no actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may interfere with the accreditation process.
- Completion of the ANMAC Assessor Education and Preparation modules and self-directed learning activities.
- Assessors are required to have a working knowledge of the objectives and guiding principles of the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law](#) (2009) and the NMBA standards.

## Engaging an Assessment Team

ANMAC will establish an assessment team primarily to assess education provider's submission for accreditation. Assessors may also be invited to participate in the review and assessment of targeted monitoring, program changes and/or complaints. An assessment team will generally comprise four members - an Associate Director, academic and a clinician, manager or a nurse/midwife working in policy or regulation roles. One of whom will be appointed as Chair. The chair will usually have undertaken previous accreditation assessments within the last 5 years. Retired academics can be used as part of an assessment team for up to 2 years and must remain registered to be eligible.

## Notice to education provider

ANMAC will notify the education provider of the names and current places of employment of the proposed assessment team. The education provider has the option to decline team member(s) on grounds of potential or perceived conflict of interest. For example:

- Personal conflicts could include close friendship, family relationship or animosity between an assessor and staff of the education provider.
- Professional conflicts could include affiliations with the institution or associations within institution competing with the provider/program being accredited.

## Responsibilities of all Assessment Team Members

It is important that all members of an assessment team focus their review on the analysis and evaluation of the evidence submitted by the education provider against the specific ANMAC accreditation standards. It is crucial to the integrity of the process that only information relevant to the accreditation standards is requested and considered by members of the assessment team. The following are examples of practices an assessment team member will undertake during as accreditation assessment.

- Reading the submission documents to familiarise yourself with the program
- Independently analysing and evaluating the evidence provided against the criteria for each standard and determining to what extent the evidence meets the criteria.
- Actively participating in the collated review virtual team meeting to share findings and provide feedback on the submission.
- Maintaining the focus on evidence requirements of the accreditation standards
- Promoting productive group dynamics during the site visit.
- Contributing to team activities e.g., taking notes at meetings and sharing the workload.
- Contributing to all accreditation reports and documentation.
- Providing a comprehensive response within agreed timeframes.
- Working collaboratively with all members of assessment team, aiming to reach consensus during all stages and on all aspects of assessment.

## Estimated commitment time

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED TIME	FURTHER DETAILS
Undertake an independent Preliminary Review of the education provider's (EP's) submission	Generally, 8-16 hours depending on quality of evidence	Assessors will have a minimum of 2 weeks to submit their review.
Enter comments into the preliminary review template provided against each criterion. Email your review to the Associate Director (AD), prior to the Assessment Team (AT) meeting	Time spent is included in task above.	
Participate in the AT meeting – introduction to AT members, discuss findings from your preliminary review	Minimum of 3 hours	AT virtual meeting - may require upload of software and testing of technology
Check accuracy of the draft Collated Review Report circulated by the AD and provide feedback as necessary	Minimum of 1 hour	
Review evidence submitted by the EP prior to the site visit	Minimum of 3 hours depending on quality of evidence	
Communicate with the AT prior to the site visit to share findings from your review of pre-site visit evidence	Minimum of 1 hour	
Participate in the site visit as per the Site Visit Agenda – opportunity to view facilities, clarify evidence, conduct stakeholder interviews	Minimum of 1 day depending on the number and location of sites to be visited	Consider travel time - depending on your location may need day before and day after site visit(s). Travel bookings for assessment team will be organised through ANMAC administration.
Check accuracy of the draft Site Visit Report circulated by the AD and provide feedback as necessary	Responses usually required within 1 week.	
Further evidence cycles may be required post site visit which require your review of submitted evidence and provision of feedback as necessary	1-2 hours per cycle depending on quantity of requested evidence	Further AT meetings may be required to facilitate consensus
Check accuracy of the draft Outcome of Accreditation Assessment Report circulated by the AD and provide feedback as necessary	Less than 1 hour	
Chair of the Assessment Team attends the Accreditation Committee meeting with the AD	Generally, 1 hour depending on the quality of program	

# Appendix 1 - Registration Accreditation Scheme

## Overview

ANMAC consults with stakeholders and experts and develops accreditation standards that enable accreditation and monitoring of nursing and midwifery programs of study. ANMAC standards are referenced by education providers when preparing education programs for accreditation or endorsement by ANMAC and approval by NMBA. These standards are used by ANMAC, education providers and the NMBA to ensure that programs of study adequately prepare graduates for practice in Australia for the relevant qualification. Each registration or endorsement type has a specific set of standards that are used in the assessment and monitoring of programs leading to eligibility to apply for that registration or endorsement with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).

The objectives of the national registration and accreditation scheme are –

- a. to provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered; and
- b. to facilitate workforce mobility across Australia by reducing the administrative burden for health practitioners wishing to move between participating jurisdictions or to practise in more than one participating jurisdiction; and
- c. to facilitate the provision of high-quality education and training of health practitioner; and
- d. to facilitate the rigorous and responsive assessment of overseas-trained health practitioners; and
- e. to facilitate access to services provided by health practitioners in accordance with the public interest; and
- f. to enable the continuous development of a flexible, responsive and sustainable Australian health workforce and to enable innovation in the education of, and service delivery by, health practitioners.

The guiding principles of the national registration and accreditation scheme are as follows –

- a. the scheme is to operate in a transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fairway;
- b. fees required to be paid under the scheme are to be reasonable having regard to the efficient and effective operation of the scheme;
- c. restrictions on the practice of a health profession are to be imposed under the scheme only if it is necessary to ensure health services are provided safely and are of an appropriate quality.

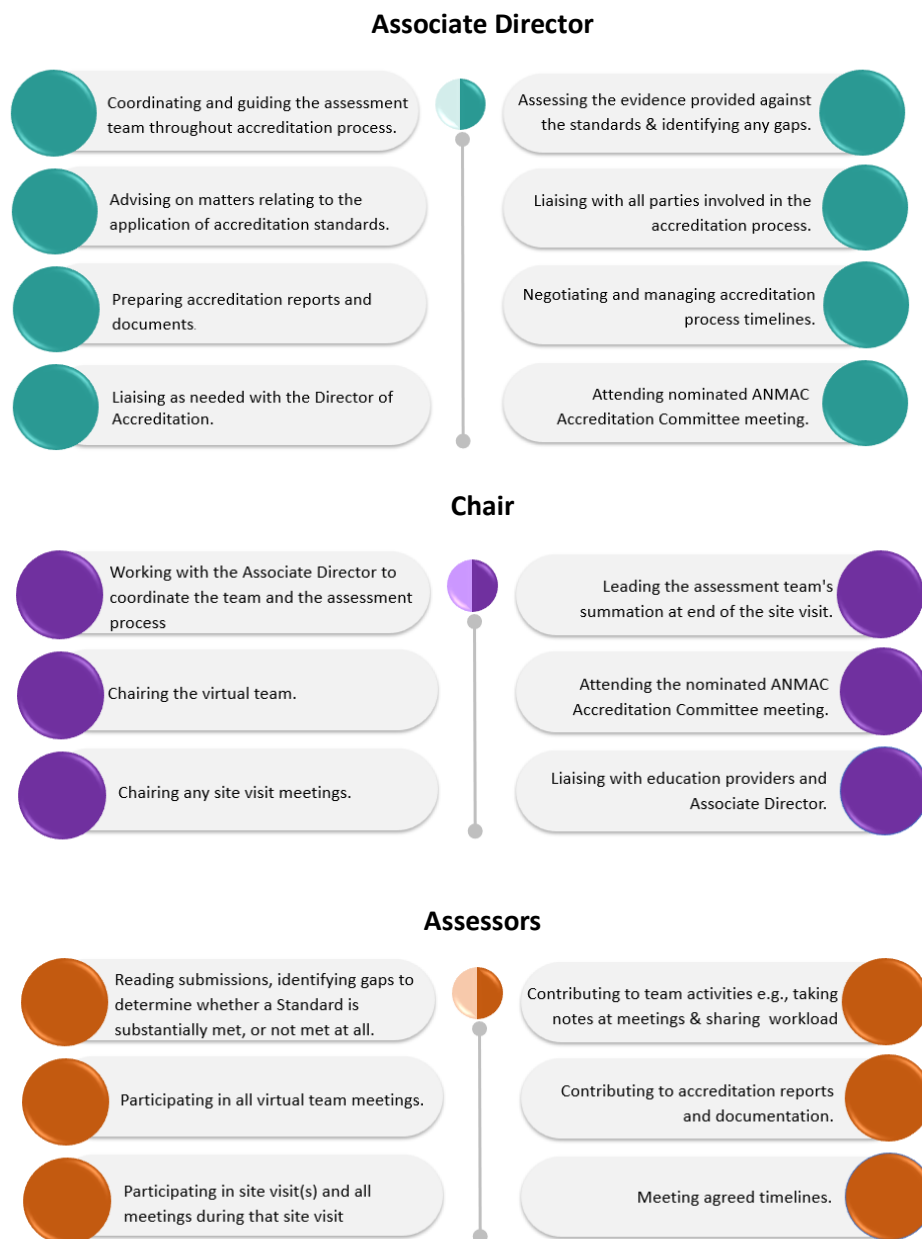
## Appendix 2 - The assessment team

### Overview

ANMAC assessment teams are formed for three main purposes:

- 1) Accreditation assessment of all nursing and midwifery education programs and providers – where qualifications will lead to registration or endorsement under the National Law as a nurse or midwife
- 2) When there are multifaceted or significant education program changes that require in depth review by a team.
- 3) For complex or significant monitoring functions: e.g., substantive improvements, concerns or complaints or breakdowns in communication and information

### Assessment team roles and responsibilities:



Finally, working amicably with all members of assessment team, aiming to reach consensus during all stages and on all aspects of the assessment.



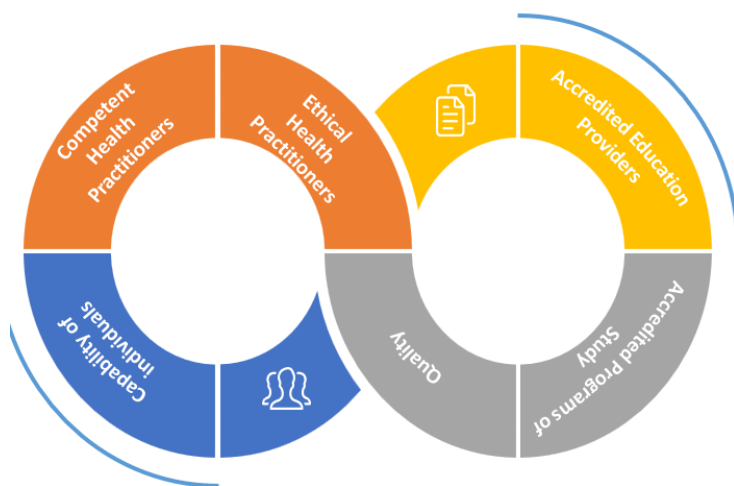
## Appendix 3 - Key instruments of assessment

### Overview

Standards are key instruments of assessment. Standards and policy and procedure are a number of key elements ensuring a successful accreditation assessment.

#### Standards:

- Measure a level of quality or attainment
- Providing a basis of determining whether an education provider and program meet an established standard of professional education
- Identify and communicate required quality improvements



#### NMBA - Standards for Practice

Measurable levels:

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Attitudes
- Values
- Professional capabilities

#### ANMAC - Accreditation Standards

- Safety of the public
- Governance
- Program of study
- Student experience
- Student assessment

#### Policies and procedures provide direction on:

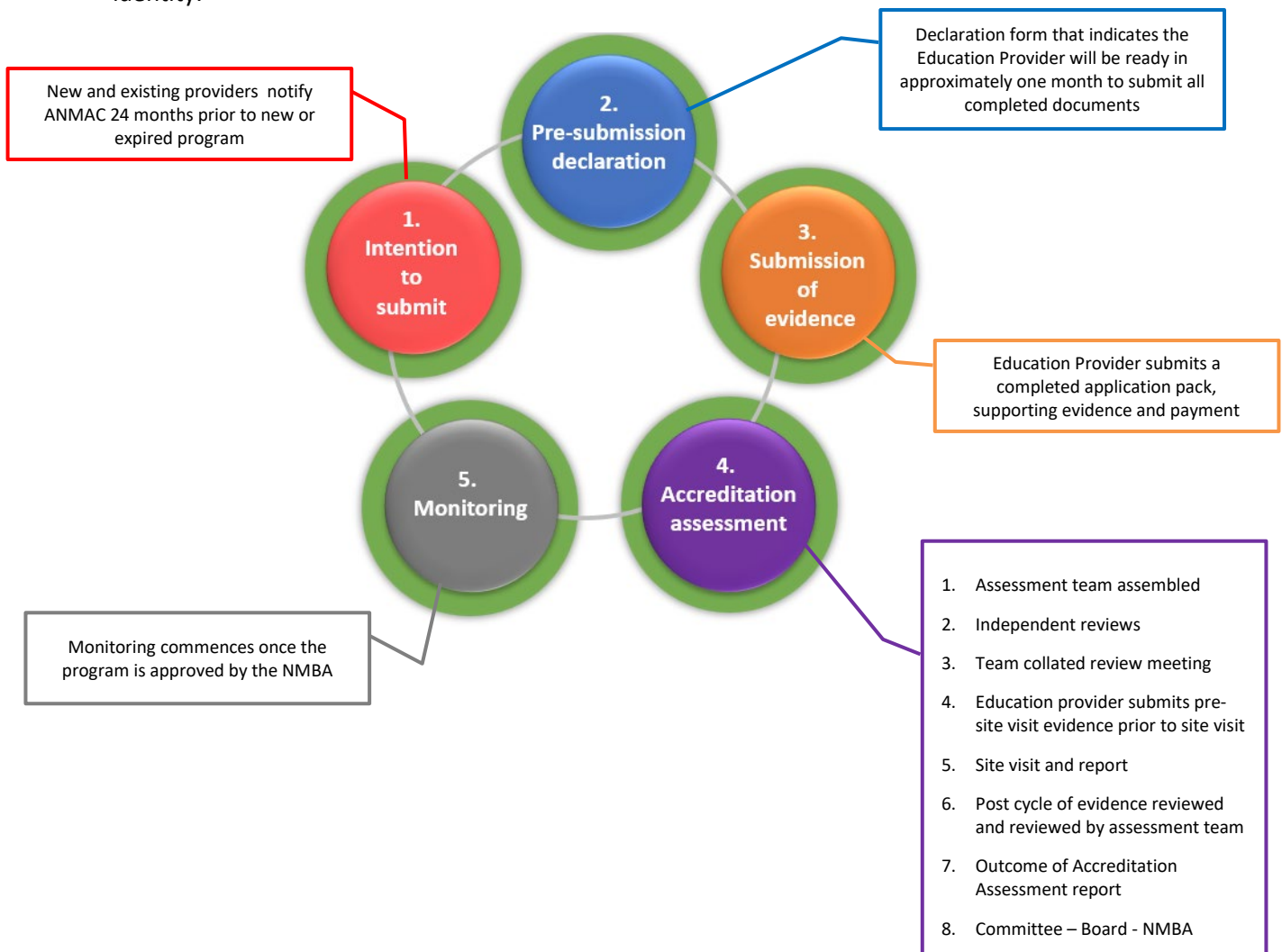
- Steps to be completed by the education provider
- Accreditation application requirements, including submission of the education provider's self-assessment and supporting evidence
- Assembly and purpose of assessment teams
- Timelines for accreditation – what happens when
- Decision-making and administration of the National Law\* that is critical to the operations of accreditation.

## Appendix 4 - Process of assessment

### Overview

ANMAC considers each program submission as a new accreditation and therefore does not reaccredit programs.

Accreditation is not transferable between organisations regardless of change of ownership or legal identity.



The process from the time the team are engaged to when the program completes the ANMAC process can take between 9 – 12 months, depending on the timely responses from the EP and the quality of evidence provided

The NMBA approval process timeframe is separate to ANMAC's accreditation assessment and is essential for a program to lead to registration or endorsement.

An Education Provider cannot enrol into the proposed program of study until final NMBA approval and display on the Approved Programs of Study list on the NMBA website

## Appendix 5 - Risk management and monitoring

### Overview

The outcomes from an accreditation assessment can include:

**Accreditation** - ANMAC is satisfied the program and provider meet the accreditation standards – section 48(1)(a) National Law. Accreditation is usually granted for five years.

**Accreditation with conditions** - when a program substantially meets the accreditation standards enables provider and program to meet the accreditation standards within a reasonable timeframe – section 48(1)(b) National Law reviews provider’s accreditation status to determine if it should be revoked

**Refusal of accreditation** - The written notice must state:

- reason for the decision
- that, within 30 days after receiving the notice, the education provider may apply to the accreditation authority for an internal review of the decision
- how the education provider may apply for a review.

Following the assessment of evidence against standards one of the accreditation outcomes is that a risk rating is applied to each program to reflect the Accreditation Committee’s findings, as well as the Committee’s view of the requirement for subsequent oversight to be provided on an ongoing basis. Program’s risk ratings are regularly reviewed.

Section 50 National Law requires ANMAC to monitor programs of study approved by the NMBA to ensure the program and education provider continue to meet the approved accreditation standards.

#### Types of monitoring:



## Appendix 6 - The accreditation standards

### Overview

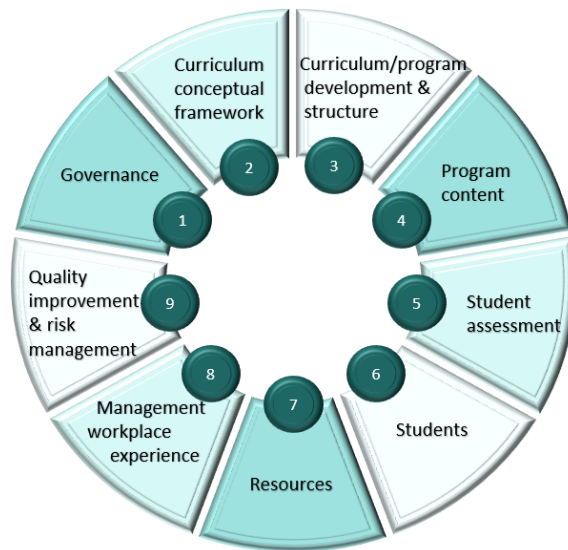
ANMAC uses accreditation standards to accredit and assess education providers and programs of study leading to eligibility to apply to the NMBA for registration as a Midwife, Registered Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, or Enrolled Nurse

Standards' review occur approximately every 5 years and require:

- Aligned to the NMBA professions Standards for practice
- Wide-ranging consultation including Council of Australian Governments, Office of Best Practice Regulation

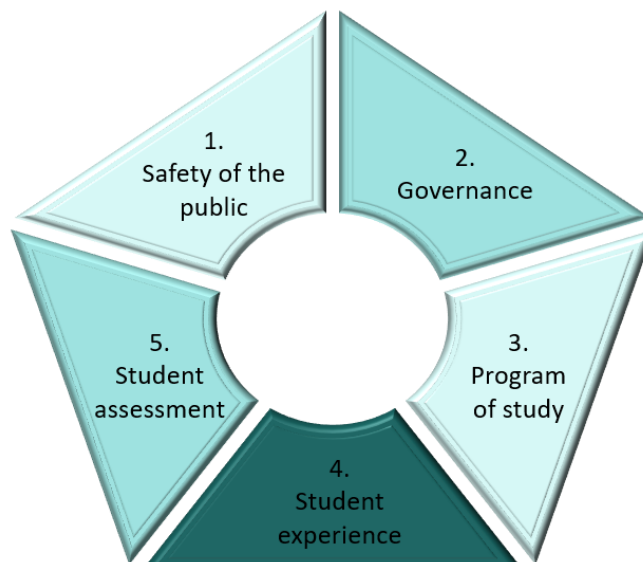
Nurse Practitioner Accreditation  
Standards 2015

Enrolled Nurse Accreditation  
Standards 2017



Registered Nurse Accreditation  
Standards 2019

Midwifery Accreditation Standards  
2021



## Additional resources

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework](#)
- [ANMAC Privacy Policy](#)
- [ANMAC Standards](#)
- [Become an Assessor](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Nurses and the Code of Conduct for Midwives](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [ANMAC Policies and Explanatory notes](#)
- [ANMAC Privacy Policy 2020](#)
- [ANMAC Program accreditation](#)
- [ANMAC Glossary](#)
- [NMBA Approved Programs of Study](#)
- [Standards for practice for nurses and midwives](#)
- [Appreciative enquiry](#)